

BUCKFASTLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT  
FOR THE YEAR 1966

PRESENTED BY

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR



## AREA No. 5 · SOUTH WEST DEVON

*DARTMOUTH and TOTNES Municipal Boroughs*

BUCKFASTLEIGH KINGSBIDGE SALCOMBE	{ Urban Districts	KINGSBIDGE PLYMPTON ST. MARY TAVISTOCK TOTNES	{ Rural Districts
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*With the Compliments of the  
Medical Officer of Health*

A faint, light-colored watermark or background image of a classical building with four columns and a triangular pediment is visible across the entire page.

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# URBAN DISTRICT OF BUCKFASTLEIGH

## Annual Report on the Health of the Area for the year 1966.

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BUCKFASTLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT

Report on the Health of the District for the Year 1966.

p r e f a c e

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present herewith the Report on the Health of the District during 1966, drawn up along the lines suggested in Ministry of Health Circular 1/67, dated January, 1967. Included in the Report is the Report of your Public Health Inspector.

Population, Births and Deaths.

The Registrar General estimated a drop in population of 40 persons. This was brought about by deaths exceeding births by 7 persons and by 33 people moving away from the District.

The Birth Rate at 15.83 is below the National Average of 17.7, and the Death Rate at 10.57 is also lower than that for the rest of the Country (11.7).

Diseases of the heart and circulation again accounted for most deaths and there was one death from a motor vehicle accident. There were only two infant deaths.

General Health.

This remains very good and only one case of infectious disease was notified during the year. The Public Health Inspector (and Surveyor) gives details of inspections carried out in his section of this Report.

Again I wish to thank all the members of the Council and Staff for their help and co-operation during the year.

John Wildman.

Medical Officer of Health.

October, 1967.



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT 1966.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Dr. M. McQuaid (resigned April, 1966)  
Dr. R.B. Walker (from April to October, 1966)

John Wildman, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.  
(Appointed Acting M.O.H. October, 1966)

DEPUTY MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Mary E. Budding, M.B., B.Ch., B.Sc., D.P.H.  
(Appointed April, 1966)

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR (Also Surveyor).

G.T.W. Allen, F.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.  
Council Offices,  
Town Hall,  
Buckfastleigh.

Tel. Buckfastleigh 2133

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman

Councillor A.W. Thompson.

Chairman of the Council

Councillor G.L.E. Scoble, J.P.

and

ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

M.O.H. Central Office.

Area No.5 - South West Devon,  
Public Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
Plympton, Plymouth. Tel. Plymouth 36644

M.O.H. Clerk.

Miss G. Prowse.

Tel. Plymouth 36644



## SECTION A

### VITAL STATISTICS AND GENERAL STATISTICS 1966.

Table 1

Figures for 1965 are shown in brackets.

#### POPULATION:

##### Estimated Mid-Year Population of Buckfastleigh Urban District

2,520 (2,560)

Natural increase or decrease	...	...	- 7
Migration in or out	...	...	- 33
Total increase or decrease	...	...	- 40
Population at 1961 Census	...	...	2,558

#### GENERAL STATISTICS:

##### Area of Buckfastleigh Urban District in Acres

1,365

##### Number of Inhabited Houses according to Rate Books

1,012 (931)

Number of Houses per acre	...	...	0.742
Number of Persons per acre	...	...	1.846
Number of Persons per house	...	...	2.490
Dwellings owned by the Council	...	...	397(330)

##### Rateable Value of District

£96,941 (£91,286)

##### Sum Represented by a Penny Rate

£375 (£366)



VITAL STATISTICS AND GENERAL STATISTICS 1966.

Table 2

Figures for 1965 are shown in brackets.

BIRTHS:

<u>Standardised Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population</u>	...	15.83 (17.66)
<u>Area Comparability Factor for Births</u>	...	1.33
<u>Number of Live Births</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
<u>Total</u>	13	17
Legitimate	12	17
Illegitimate	1	0
<u>Number of Still Births</u>	0	0

DEATHS:

<u>Standardised Death Rate per 1,000 population</u>	...	10.57 (14.74)
<u>Area Comparability Factor for Deaths</u>	...	0.72
<u>Number of Deaths</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
<u>All Ages - Total</u>	20	17
<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 yr.</u>	0	2
Number under 4 weeks of age	0	1
Number under 1 week of age	0	1
<u>Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births</u>	...	66.67 (29.4)

COMPARISON WITH RATES FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

Birth Rate 17.7 (18.1)      Death Rate 11.7 (11.5)

Infantile Mortality Rate 19.0 (19.0)  
(Infants under 1 year of age)



PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

Table 1.

<u>DISEASE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Age Group in Years</u>					
		<u>Under 1</u>	<u>1-</u>	<u>5-</u>	<u>15-</u>	<u>25-</u>	<u>Over 65</u>
Tuberculosis (lungs)	2	0	0	0	0	2	0

Table 2.

<u>DISEASE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Incidence by Quarters</u>			
		<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>
Tuberculosis (lungs)	2	0	2	0	0



CAUSES OF DEATH.

<u>Line No.</u>							<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Total</u>
ALL CAUSES	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	17	37
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
2. Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
3. Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
4. Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
5. Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
6. Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
7. Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
8. Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases							0	0	0
10. Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
11. Malignant Neoplasm, lungs, bronchus	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
12. Malignant Neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
13. Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	...	...	...	-	0	0
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms							4	1	5
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
16. Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	2	5
18. Coronary disease, angina	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	5	9
19. Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
20. Other heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3	5
21. Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
22. Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
23. Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
24. Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	-	0
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	...	...	-	0	0
31. Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	4	4
33. Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
34. All other accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
35. Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
36. Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0



## SECTION B.

### GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES

#### 1. Hospitals.

A general practitioner hospital with 15 mixed medical and surgical beds is situated in Ashburton. Other hospitals which serve the district are Newton Abbot Hospital and Torbay Hospital. There is a maternity unit at Broomborough Hospital, Totnes, to which many of the Buckfastleigh mothers are admitted for their confinement.

#### 2. County Council Health Services.

Under the National Health Services Act, 1946, the County Council provides the following services:-

Domiciliary midwives, home nurses, health visitors, supervisory care of expectant and nursing mothers and children under five, ambulance services, vaccination and immunisation procedures, home help services, and the aftercare of such persons.

One district nurse/midwife works in the district together with a health visitor and a nursing assistant. A child welfare clinic is held twice a month and the health visitor for the area is in attendance. The Home Help Service is provided by the County Council and the local Organiser, Mrs. Clarke, has her office at 43, Fore Street, Totnes. Telephone Totnes 2663. A chiropody service is provided by the County Council and has been made available for the handicapped, aged, and expectant mothers. A chiropody clinic operates at Buckfastleigh Health Centre for a whole day once a month. (Telephone Buckfastleigh 2371).

#### 3. Laboratory Service.

Bacteriological examinations of pathological specimens and samples of milk, water and ice cream are carried out at the Public Health Laboratories at Exeter and Plymouth. The chemical analysis of water is undertaken by public analysts at Exeter.

#### 4. Health Centre.

This was opened in May, 1966, and provides surgery accommodation and clerical help for two General Medical Practitioners as well as clinic facilities for Devon County Council Services.

#### 5. Mass Miniature Radiography.

Facilities were available at Totnes and Newton Abbot for the general public to visit the Mass Radiography Unit, which called regularly every fortnight at those towns.



## 6. Mental Health.

Arrangements for treatment under the Mental Health Act, 1959, can be made either by the patient's own doctor or by the Mental Welfare Officer - Mr. P. Rescorla, "Rosabelle", Plymouth Road, Totnes. Telephone Totnes 2335 and 3534.

## 7. Family Planning Service.

A clinic is held at the Central Clinic, Midvale Road, Paignton every first Monday of the month, 6.30 - 7.30 p.m., and every second and fourth Monday, 2 - 3.30 p.m. A clinic is also held at the Adult Education Centre, Shinners Bridge, Dartington, on the third Tuesday afternoon of alternate months beginning in January of each year. Appointments can be made by The Appointments Secretary, Family Planning Association, 4, Barnfield Hill, Exeter. Telephone Exeter 76892 (on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays).

## 8. Cervical Cytology.

A cervical cytology clinic for the early detection of cancer in women is held once a month at the Buckfastleigh Health Centre, Telephone Buckfastleigh 2371. All women between the ages of 30 and 60 years of age are eligible to apply for a test.



## SECTION C.

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

#### 1. Refuse.

Refuse is collected weekly and taken to the refuse tip which is a disused quarry situated well away from the town. While measures are taken to ensure nuisances do not occur at this tip, it must be realised that fully controlled tipping is not carried out in Buckfastleigh. Some measure of control over fly and rat infestation is obtained by controlled burning. This has become necessary because of the bulky volume of the refuse due to the double and treble wrapping of some goods and packages. Burning reduces this bulk and kills fly eggs and larvae and deters the scavenging of rats.

#### 2. Sewage.

There has been no change in the running of the Works nor in the nature of the sewage arriving at the Works, which is still 50% trade liquors. The effluent from the parish of Dean Prior in the Rural District of Totnes was connected to the Plymouth Road sewer during the latter part of the year.

#### 3. Caravans.

There are two licensed caravan sites in the district, one of which is owned by the Council. Both are well run and managed.

#### 4. Factories. (See also Section F.).

This Local Authority is responsible for enforcing the provisions in the Factories Act, 1961, relating to sanitary conveniences and the regulations made in connection with these in all factories. The District Council is also responsible for enforcing the provisions of the Act dealing with cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature, ventilation, and drainage of floors, in all factories not using mechanical power.

Part 8 of the Factories Act, 1961, deals with home work and the provisions relating to this are enforced by the District Council. One outworker lives in the town.

#### 5. Swimming Pool.

The swimming pool has a capacity of 59,100 gallons. The water is obtained from a leat running through the town, the origin of which is an upland surface source on Dartmoor. The leat however runs through a part of the town and some mixed farming country before arriving at the pool, and the water is not filtered before it fills the pool, which is open-air. An automatic drip-feed chlorinator was fixed to the inlet end of the pool at the beginning of the season and it has proved highly satisfactory.



## 6. Rodent Control.

Under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, this Local Authority has an obligation to ensure that, as far as is practicable, the area is kept free from rats or mice. For this purpose frequent inspections are necessary, and, in addition, occupiers of land are required to give notice to the Local Authority whenever it comes to their knowledge that rats or mice are present on the land in substantial numbers. In the case of food premises, the notification must be made to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food.

It has been satisfying to find that the sewers of the Town are virtually free of rodents, but until waste food is completely disposed of by householders there will always be a small number about. The chief areas of infestation are alongside the two rivers that flow through the Town - owing to the scraps etc. that are thrown into the water.

## 7. Pest Control.

There is no nuisance in the Town arising from pigeons, but there has been an increase in the number of requests for the destruction of wasps' nests. These have been done free of charge where it was considered that the wasps could be a danger to road users, particularly pedestrians.

## 8. Water.

Upland surface water is collected on Dartmoor and reaches the district by gravity from a large storage reservoir. The water is chlorinated, and hardened by adding soda ash. The treated water is not plumbo-solvent.

The South West Devon Water Board carry out bacteriological examinations at regular intervals. No contamination of the water has been reported. The quality and quantity of the water was satisfactory throughout the year.

## 9. Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963.

The total number of premises affected is only 4, and apart from the offices, other premises are being inspected under other Acts.

No changes, other than personnel, took place during the year under review. All conditions were again found to be satisfactory according to the Act.

## 10. Recreation.

A further one and a half acres of land was purchased by the Council as an addition to the Duckpond Playing Field, and the Council approved in principle the provision of a site in the Playing Field for the erection of a Youth Centre with changing rooms and ancillary buildings.

A small area of land on the Barn Park Estate was set aside, fenced and surfaced, for a play-space for infants under school age.



## SECTION D.

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

#### 1. Food Premises.

There were 43 food premises operating in the district during the year and this figure includes 10 cafes, hotels and restaurants, and 33 retail food shops. All were visited and found to be well-managed and clean. Some of the shops are rather small and the rear of the premises tend to get cluttered up with empty packing cases, thus creating a bad impression as well as harbourage for pests.

Two premises were inspected and registered for the sale of ice cream.

#### 2. Food Hygiene.

The high standard of hygiene by all food handlers is being maintained.

#### 3. Unsound Food.

A small quantity of tinned food was surrendered, again apparently due to bad warehousing. One complaint was received concerning some flour confectionery being mouldy. This was due to a returned stale consignment being picked up by a vanman in error and re-distributed.

#### 4. Meat Inspection.

Meat Inspection was carried out as in previous years.

Two slaughterhouses cater for the district. The following is a table showing the meat inspected and the quantity condemned:-

	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep &amp; Lambs</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Total</u>
No. killed	216	12	340	-	568
No. inspected	216	12	340	-	568
No. of entire carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-
No. of carcases of which some part was condemned	3	-	-	-	3



## SECTION E.

### HOUSING.

#### 1. General.

Of the 1,012 inhabited houses in the district 397 were owned by the Council.

The Bam Park Housing Estate was completed and provided for 26 bungalows for retired people with a call-bell system from each bungalow to a resident Warden on the site.

#### 2. Housing Survey.

The "Buckfastleigh Urban District No.1 Clearance Area, 1966" was made by the Council in respect of Nos. 38 - 44A, Chapel Street, a total of 10 tenements affecting 21 people.

It has been interesting to note that in recent years, upon a re-inspection of older property, there has been evidence of more dampness than previously. This appears not only as an extension of water-stains on ceilings and wallpapers, but actually as dampness that adheres to the back of the hand - plus, in nearly every case, fungoid or mould growth in airless spaces - and this in spite of repairs by landlords and the absence of visible structural defects.

The common factor seems to be the replacement of the old open coal fire-place with electric or gas appliances coupled with the sealing up of the chimney flues, resulting in a lack of air-flow through the room and the attendant condensation on cold interior surfaces when the heating is turned off.

As these houses were designed (!) 75-100 years ago they lack air-ducting which is so essential for modern heating systems.

In view of, but neglecting the deeper implications of, the socio-economic circumstances of the tenant, it poses the problem of the "tenant-landlord-liability" in so far as the dampness is attributable to this cause, and so far I have not found an answer.

#### 3. Housing improvement grants.

Improvement grants were approved in respect of 21 properties in the town.

#### 4. Infestation.

No cases of infestation occurred during the year.



## SECTION F.

### FACTORIES ACT, 1961.

The following is a summary of information required in respect of the year 1966. A total of 116 inspections was made in respect of 35 premises listed in the Factories Register.

#### Part I of the Act.

##### 1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

###### (i) Factories without Mechanical Power. (Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6).

Number on Register	...	...	...	2
Inspections	...	...	...	4
Written Notices	...	...	...	0
Occupiers prosecuted	...	...	...	0

###### (ii) Factories with Mechanical Power. (Section 7).

Number on Register	...	...	...	27
Inspections	...	...	...	62
Written Notices	...	...	...	0
Occupiers prosecuted	...	...	...	0

###### (iii) Other Premises under the Act. (Section 7)

(Electric Stations, Institutions, Sites of Building Operations, Works of Engineering Construction, but excluding Outworkers' Premises).

Number on Register	...	...	...	6
Inspections	...	...	...	50
Written Notices	...	...	...	0
Occupiers prosecuted	...	...	...	0

##### 2. Cases in which Defects were found.

See table overleaf.



2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were made	
	Found	Remedied	Referred			
			By H.M. Insp.	To H.M. Insp.		
Want of cleanliness (S.1.)	-	-	-	-	-	
Overcrowding (S.2.)	-	-	-	-	-	
Unreasonable temp. (S.3.)	-	-	-	-	-	
Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	-	-	-	-	-	
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6.)	-	-	-	-	-	
Sanitary conveniences (S.7.)	-	-	-	-	-	
a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-	
b) Unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	-	-	
c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-	
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	-	-	-	-	-	



PART VIII OF THE ACT.

OUTWORK.

(Sections 133 and 134)

Nature of work.	Section 133			Section 134		
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sec. 133(1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending list to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in un-wholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Wearing apparel (making)	1	-	-	-	-	-





